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REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed November 7, 2009, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration. To further the prosecution of this Application, Applicants submit the following remarks, have added claims, and have amended claims. The claims as now presented are believed to be in allowable condition.

Claims 1-19 were pending in this Application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 9 have been amended and claims 20-24 have been added. No new matter has been added. Accordingly, claims 1-24 are now pending in this Application. Claims 1 and 9 are independent claims.

Drawings

The Office Action does not specify whether the drawings have been accepted or rejected. Applicants, therefore, assume that the drawings are acceptable. Applicants respectfully request that the next communication from the Office indicate that the drawings are accepted.

Rejections under §102 and §103

Claims 1-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,006,332 (Rabne, et al.) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,658,571 (O'Brien, et al.) and U.S. Patent No. 6,728,885 (Taylor, et al.). Claims 17 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Rabne, O'Brien, and Taylor in further view of U.S. Patent No. 5,802,178 (Holden, et al.). Claim 18 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Rabne, O'Brien, and Taylor in further view of U.S. patent No. 7,392,234 (Shaath, et al.).

Applicants respectfully traverse each of these rejections and request reconsideration. The claims are now in allowable condition.

Claims 1 and 9 have been amended to recite an additional limitation which further distinguishes over the cited prior art. The cited references do not teach, either alone or in combination, a system or method having the claimed limitations, including the newly added limitations.

For the reasons stated above, claim 1 patentably distinguishes over the cited prior art, and the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be withdrawn. Accordingly, claim 1 is now in allowable condition.

Because claims 2-8 and 17-18 depend from and further limit claim 1, claims 2-8 and 17-18 are in allowable condition for at least the same reasons. Additionally, it should be understood that the dependent claims recite additional features which further patentably distinguish over the cited prior art.

For the reasons stated above, claim 9 patentably distinguishes over the cited prior art, and the rejection of claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be withdrawn. Accordingly, claim 9 is now in allowable condition.

Because claims 10-16 and 19 depend from and further limit claim 9, claims 10-16 and 19 are in allowable condition for at least the same reasons. Additionally, it should be understood that the dependent claims recite additional features which further patentably distinguish over the cited prior art.

Newly Added Claims

Claims 20-24 have been added and are believed to be in allowable condition. Claim 20 is independent, and claims 21-24 depend from claim 20. Support for claim 20 is provided throughout the Specification, particularly in paragraphs [0055]-[0237] (see published version, U.S. Patent Application Publication 2002/0178271). Support for claims 21-24 is provided within the

Specification, for example, in paragraphs [0170]-[0192] and Tables 1 and 2. No new matter has been added.

The cited references do not teach, either alone or in combination, a method having the limitations found in the newly added claims. Therefore, newly added claims 20-24 are in allowable condition.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, this Application should be in condition for allowance. A Notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this Amendment, that the Application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call the Applicants' Representative at the number below.

Applicants hereby petition for any extension of time which is required to maintain the pendency of this case. If there is a fee occasioned by this Amendment, including an extension fee, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 50-3661.

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If the enclosed papers or fees are considered incomplete, the Patent Office is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned collect at (508) 616-2900, in Westborough, Massachusetts.

Respectfully submitted,

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